



Hispanics/Latinos and Diabetes

Fact Sheet

Diabetes mellitus is one of the most serious health challenges facing the estimated 27 million Hispanics/Latinos in the United States.

- Diabetes is the 6th leading cause of death among Hispanics/Latinos, and the 4th leading cause of death among Hispanic women and Hispanic elderly.
- Hispanics/Latinos are at higher risk of developing and dying from diabetes, and twice as likely as other populations to experience complications such as heart disease, high blood pressure, blindness, kidney disease, amputations and nerve damage.

Incidence and Prevalence of Diabetes

- Diabetes has an earlier onset in Hispanics/Latinos than in other populations. Among Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans, the age of onset is at 30-50 years old.
- On average, Hispanics/Latinos are almost twice as likely to have diabetes as non-Hispanic whites of similar age.
- Diabetes is two to three times more common in Mexican-American and Puerto Rican adults than in non-Hispanic whites. Cuban Americans have a lower rate of diabetes than Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans, but still higher than that of non-Hispanic whites.
- The rates of Type 2 diabetes are 110% higher among Mexican Americans and 120% higher among Puerto Ricans than among non-Hispanic whites.
- More than 10% of all Mexican Americans 20 years or older have diabetes.
- Among persons aged 45-74, the prevalence rate for diabetes is:
 - 23.9% for Mexican Americans,
 - 26.1% for Puerto Ricans,
 - 15.8% for Cuban Americans, and
 - 12% for non-Hispanic whites.

Risk Factors for Developing Diabetes

- Family history.
- Overweight.
- Sedentary lifestyle.
- Smoking.
- Over 40 years of age.
- Limited access to health care.